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MONTHLY JOURNAL OF
THE MUSHROOM GROWERS'
ASSOCIATION

MGA

BULLETIN

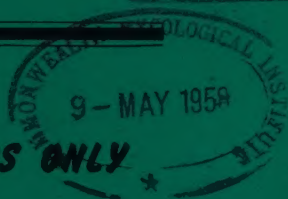
MAY, 1958

NUMBER 101

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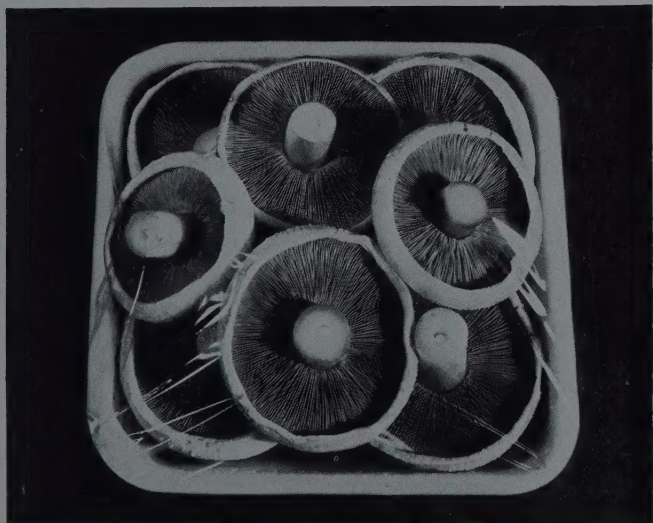


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No responsibility can be accepted by the Editor, the Editorial Board, or the Mushroom Growers' Association for statements made or views expressed in this Bulletin, or for any advertisements included in this publication.

EDITORIAL

MESSAGE FROM NEW CHAIRMAN



The Executive Committee has seen fit to elect me as your Chairman for the ensuing year. I am extremely proud of this confidence in me and am more than pleased that this honour has come the way of a Northern Grower. I shall do all in my power to justify this trust and do my utmost for the Association members in general.

I therefore appeal to you all for your continued support and I would point out that any such voluntary organization as ours has many faults and ideas of policy on which all members are not in full agreement. The benefits however are much greater and well worth the subscrip-

tion. For such a nominal subscription the MGA obviously cannot teach members to grow mushrooms. It can however arrange for members to meet together, to get to know each other, and thereby discuss their problems and difficulties and so help one another.

As you are aware the country has been divided into seven Areas for the purpose of electing the Area Representatives on the Executive Committee. I hope this year to hold at least one meeting in each area and have a mushroom expert or panel of experienced growers to answer questions. Any member may attend all these meetings if he so wishes and so would soon acquire some exceptionally valuable information on different methods of growing.

With regard to the future I feel that we as an industry have no cause to feel despondent. We are not receiving a Government Subsidy which could be removed at any time. We are not yet faced with over-production and so long as we remain progressive in our outlook we have no cause to fear. We must however look to Publicity and Research and

be up-to-date in our production methods in order to keep pace with the increasing cost of production and the decreasing selling price of our produce. After all, there is an almost unlimited market for mushrooms if we can retail them at 1/- per quarter.

Our aim should be increased production from our present area rather than increased production through a greater capital outlay, as was pointed out at the Annual Meeting.

Best Wishes and good healthy crops for 1958.

F. BLEAZARD.

KNOW YOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mr. Frank Bleazard, newly elected Chairman of the MGA Executive Committee runs two mushroom growing concerns in Lancashire, one at Blackpool (Messrs. C. Bleazard & Son) and the other at nearby Staining (Messrs. Mereside Mushroom Company). Mr. Bleazard, a familiar figure in the mushroom world has for a number of years made a particular point of attending as many MGA functions as possible. His Lancashire farms operate mainly on the tray system and Mr. Bleazard is assisted in his enterprises by his son John. It was in 1949 that Mr. Bleazard first joined the Association. He has served on the Executive Committee since 1952.

New Vice-Chairman is 45 year old **Mr. Raymond Thompson**, a product of Harrow School. He is much travelled, spending some time in France and Germany learning insurance before joining Lloyds in London where he was an Underwriter before the war. He was an R.A.F. Intelligence Officer during the war and was three times mentioned in despatches. At the end of hostilities he travelled in South and Central America before taking up mushroom growing in 1947. Now has some 50,000 sq. ft. under cultivation, all down to the tray system of which he is amongst the keenest of advocates. Mr. Thompson, Chairman of the MGA Publicity Committee for some time, is keen on ski-ing, sailing, cooking and, of course, growing mushrooms. He is still an Underwriter at Lloyds.

Area Representation came into operation for the first time this year and was designed to make the election to the committee more democratic. However, just to confound the sponsors, the three area representatives this year were appointed to the committee without any opposition.

So much has already been written about **Mr. Fred. C. Atkins** that little is left to say. His book, "Mushroom Growing To-day," has achieved the extraordinary circulation of ten thousand copies and has rightly been described, far and wide, as the mushroom growers' bible. He is a Past Chairman of the MGA and the Mushroom Research Association, is Chairman of the MGA Research Committee and of the Glasshouse Crops Research Institute Mushroom Committee. He has served the MGA as Secretary, Treasurer, Bulletin Editor and Chairman of the Publicity, Economics, Membership, Research and Insecticides Committees. He is President of the International Conferences on Mushroom Science, Member of Honour of the French and Belgium

Research Stations and Life Member of the MGA. Without a doubt he is the most widely travelled of all mushroom growers and remains a pillar of strength to the MGA. He was born in 1912, was a King's Scholar at Ely and has been in mushroom growing for the past 20 years. He is Chairman of Noble Mushrooms Ltd., Yaxley, who farm about 35,000 sq. ft. of shelves.

Mr. E. A. Gook of Badlesmere, Faversham, Kent, was re-elected to the Committee for one of the two general seats and thus commences his second term of office. Aged about 47, Mr. Gook spent his early years in Iceland, but after completing his training as an estate agent, he settled in London. It was in 1928 that he first became interested in mushrooms. He volunteered for the Army in 1940 and was sent by Army Intelligence back to Iceland and was later commissioned, rising to the rank of Captain. He was in Africa until demobilisation. Soon after he took to commercial mushroom farming at his present farm where he is a devotee of the tray system. Married, he has one son. He is one of the earlier members of the MGA.



Finally to **Mr. R. H. Pinkerton** of Rayleigh, Essex, the last of the area representatives. Mr. Pinkerton, who has been growing mushrooms for 22 years, has a basic area of 50,000 sq. ft., all on the shelf system. Aged 38, Mr. Pinkerton was a Flt. Lieut. in the R.A.F. during the war and won the D.F.C. when flying as a navigator in Beaufighters. He is married with a son aged 13 months. Cricket is his main hobby.

Representative for the South-West Area, **Mr. Graham Griffiths**, who is 36, commenced his apprenticeship in mushroom growing in 1937 and now, with a growing area of 126,000 sq. ft. on the tray system is probably the second largest grower in this country. He started growing on his own account in 1947. Married, Mr. Griffiths' hobbies include golf and bridge. He captains Gloucestershire at golf, plays from scratch, and has been reserve for England. At bridge—a pastime shared by his attractive wife—he has played for England.





G. DE MAN (Belgium), DR. L. A. HALLA (Italian Institute for Foreign Trade), ANDRE GUNNAR (Swedish Embassy), E. H. GARDENER (National Farmers' Union), P. G. MEUWISSEN (Netherlands Embassy), R. DE WILDE (French Embassy) and G. W. BAKER (Past Chairman, MGA).

ANNUAL LUNCH AND ANNUAL MEETING

Held at the Connaught Rooms, London, on Tuesday, 18th March, the Annual Lunch and Annual Meeting of the Mushroom Growers' Association attracted a large attendance with 130 people sitting down to an excellent lunch.

Prior to the lunch the Chairman, Mr. G. V. Allen, and Mrs. Allen held a reception which was also well attended.

The guests included representatives of five foreign embassies together with Mr. Eric Gardener, Chairman of the NFU Central Horticultural Committee, Mr. Henry Haynes, Senior Horticultural Secretary at the NFU, and Mr. A. S. Lilliot, Financial Officer to the Union.

On view were hundreds of examples of various forms of publicity, obtained for the Association by Albion Publicity and arranged by Mr. Guy Reed. At lunch grace was said by Capt. G. P. Lawrence who, with Mr. G. W. Baker, retired from the Executive this year after six years unbroken service. The Chairman of the MGA, Mr. G. V. Allen, in his annual report said:—

"At Eastbourne, in 1956, you will recall that it was decided to increase subscriptions and there was some feeling that this would result in a dropping off of membership. In actual fact our numbers have decreased by nineteen overall, but in every case it would appear that these are growers who have given up.

The fact that some small growers have given up is an omen which we should all take note of, particularly as the unpleasant word 'recession' is creeping into our daily news from America, Germany

and other countries. You must all appreciate that with a commodity such as ours effective sales still depend very largely upon the amount of cash in the housewife's pocket and should the internal economic situation in the country become far worse than it is already, we may have to face the fact that our prices will have to fall accordingly.

During the past year we can presume that the output of mushrooms has considerably increased, as a number of large growers have expanded their plants. Here I would like to remind you of the fact that our average prices do not appear to have decreased very much but the value of that money received has decreased.

In my opinion the only answers to this problem in the future are (1) increased publicity efforts and (2) more efficient growing on the plants you already possess, and not an increase in size of plants. So far as publicity is concerned Mr. Baker will be giving you his own report in a few minutes. In this report he may put forward a proposal to increase your publicity subscriptions and on his behalf and, in fact, on behalf of you all, I would suggest that you give very serious consideration to this matter.

Mr. Baker's Committee, with the aid of our new firm of Public Relations represented by Mr. Reed, and by press advertising by Mr. Rudkin, have done wonderful work in the past year with the small funds available.

Growers have responded admirably with their spawn levy contributions as also have a number of Salesmen and Sundriesmen, though I do feel that in one or two isolated instances, the Trade is not fully appreciative that our publicity efforts are to their benefit as well as our own. I would like to mention how greatly admired the MGA is by other sections of the horticultural and farming community for the lively and successful manner in which it is handling its publicity and general functions, with particular emphasis on the fact that your publicity contributions are of a voluntary nature.

During the past year your Committee has, among other activities, promoted two insurance schemes, about which you have read in the Bulletin, namely, the Group BUPA scheme and the NFU Mutual scheme against fire and loss of profits.

The other innovation is that of postal voting in the election of your Committee, which this year has made an easy get-away in that three area representatives have been returned unopposed.



MR. & MRS. GRAHAM GRIFFITHS of Wrington Vale Nurseries, Congresbury, Somerset. Mr. Griffiths this year joins the MGA Executive Committee as member for the South West Area.

At this stage I would like to plant a further seed in your minds for future consideration regarding the expenses involved by your Committee members. Now that we have true area representation, a number of these members will have to travel considerable distances and give up a lot of time to handle your business, and I feel the time is coming when some contribution to their expenses out of funds should be considered.

I am to-day at the end of my year of office as your Chairman and well aware of the amount of time, work and expense involved. For me it has been a hard year. As you all know, my plant was hit last Autumn by La France and on summing up the effects I have only to look at my bank balance. I also note the fact that I seem to have cultivated a lot more grey hairs, lost a lot more hair and been reduced to wearing glasses for the first time in my life.

The main event of the last year was the Southport Conference which was attended by over 200 people who listened to 15 papers, apart from long impromptu discussions on La France. For the success of this Conference I must again thank Mr. Atkins, Mr. Bleazard and Mr. Middlebrook for organising the whole show and I would couple also Mrs. Bleazard's name and thank her for the vast amount of work which she put in. This Conference cost the Association some £240 and I would mention that this would not have been possible without your increased subscriptions.

Another memorable event during the year was the unofficial visit of a few of us to Dublin, where we were regally entertained by Mr. Roy Groom and his brother and many other growers from that district. Their hospitality will never be forgotten and our visit culminated with a visit to Mr. De Valera.

Research: Your Research Committee is in continual liaison with the Glasshouse Crops Research Institute, under the direction of Mr. Toovey, who is proving a real friend to the Industry. The small mushroom research plant at Littlehampton is well on the way to completion and meantime, strenuous and widespread research is being carried on with La France disease. Mr. Toovey was to have been present to-day but unfortunately was prevented owing to a prior engagement.



MR. FRED. C. ATKINS (left) chats with MR. R. H. PINKERTON of Rayleigh, Essex, elected to the MGA Executive Committee for the East Anglian area.

Executive: There has been one change in your Executive Committee during the year. Mr. Stanley Middlebrook tendered his resignation some months ago owing to stress of work and his place was filled by Mr. Spencer from Leeds, whom we were glad to welcome.

The Bulletin: This important publication continues to provide a mirror for all main developments in the Industry and growers all over the world, including

Moscow, are able to keep in touch with progress and each other.

1958 Exhibition: This is to be held at Bournemouth on the 1st and 2nd October, and arrangements are well in hand and will follow the general lines of the Eastbourne Exhibition of 1956, consisting of Trade Show, Mushroom Competitions, lectures, etc. It is hoped that a well-known American mushroom expert may be able to attend.



THREE POLISH EXILES, now all successfully growing mushrooms in England, seen at the Chairman's reception which preceded the annual lunch. Lt. Col. Lichtarowicz (centre) in conversation with Mr. K. Rozanski and Mr. Z. Zaklika who, as the Bermondsey Mushroom Partnership have the only existing mushroom farm in London.

Finance: During the year, Mr. Filmer undertook the task of becoming Honorary Treasurer and I leave any financial matters to him for explanation. I would add that the Balance Sheet for the year ended last October seems satisfactory and we are at least solvent. This in spite of the fact of increases in office expenses. Last October our Assistant Secretary, Miss Kolk, left us and has been ably replaced by Miss Zazzi. The office looks tidier to me than it ever has before (laughter).

International Conference: In 1959 the Triennial International Conference is to take place at Copenhagen in July. It is hoped that as many growers as possible will attend. Those of you who went to Paris in 1956 will remember that such Conferences are well worth while, both from the business and pleasure aspects.

Conclusion: Finally, what of the future of the Industry? Ambitious schemes are fermenting in the minds of some of our members, including such projects as an MGA financed processing factory to remove surplus and low-grade mushrooms from the open market. This will, of course, need money but one of our experts, with a better mathematical brain than I, has worked out that if we all contribute one twelfth of a penny per pound of mushrooms produced for a period of five years, we should raise at least £50,000 capital. I can hear you all saying, 'Oh Yes, more money again.' Voluntary subscriptions always seem so hard to get but when faced by a 'fait accompli' the majority of you seem to take your medicine without a murmur.

Listening to Chairmen's Reports in the past I seem to recall every one being able to introduce some touch of humour to raise a laugh. I am sorry I have not been able to do the same but perhaps the one thing I shall remember took place at Southport at the end of one of our serious discussions on La France, when one comparatively new Northern grower arose with a smile on his face to say that he was delighted to have now realised that he was in the throes of this disease and was not just a bad grower who could not produce any saleable mushrooms."

Mr. Allen thanked all members of the Executive Committee and Sub-committees for sustaining him during the past year, and for all the hard work they had put in and the success which has followed their endeavours. Coupled with the committees he included the Secretary, Mr. Alderton. "Between us we have mutually kept each other on the right lines. The Secretary's work is a truly full-time job these days and I sometimes wonder how he manages to compile the Bulletin and handle the heavy mail which I see piled on his desk every time I enter his office," he said.

PUBLICITY

In his report on Publicity Mr. G. W. Baker said:—

"Publicity has now become one of the most important functions of the MGA and before giving a report of the year's work I would like to record my thanks to those members who have supported me so loyally during the past year, Messrs. Allen, Berry, Filmer, Rudkin and Reed. We have had 11 full day meetings of the Publicity Committee, plus a number of informal ones and these members have given days and days of their time, endeavouring to increase the demand for our mushrooms.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Spawn Distributors for operating the Spawn Levy Scheme and the Growers for so willingly contributing. The Levy Scheme produced £3,600 and £900 was contributed by Wholesalers and Sundriesmen.

This report covers the 12 months from April, 1957 to March, 1958 and for the first time we were able to estimate our income and plan our expenditure. We had £4,500 with which to advertise £7,000,000 worth of produce.

I understand the Milk Marketing Board are planning to spend £1,000,000 this year on publicity to bring Milk to the notice of the housewife. We are endeavouring with approximately 1/250th of this amount to entice her to buy mushrooms, so you see how badly we need more funds to compete for the housewife's purse.

The whole of our annual income would not be sufficient to pay for 3—15 second spots at week-day peak time on I.T.V.

In brief there have been four main channels of expenditure:—

1. A tiny but continuous press advertising campaign.
2. The payment of a fee for public relations services.



Left to right: Messrs. MANUEL PENA MARIN, J. ROCA DUMORA, G. V. ALLEN (MGA outgoing Chairman) and FRANCISCO PENA MARIN. The Pena brothers, with Mr. Roca, hail from Spain. Mr. Roca is an experienced grower whilst the other two plan a completely new farm in the Barcelona area.

3. The subsidizing of the mushroom bags scheme.
4. Printing, Recipe Leaflets, etc.

Press Advertising

As most of you know, the Association has advertised on the back page of the *Daily Sketch*, weekly from August until the end of September last year; then every fortnight. From the beginning of April next, it is planned to resume weekly insertions until the end of September. The *Daily Sketch* was chosen for two



MRS. RAYMOND THOMPSON chatting with CAPT. G. P. LAWRENCE (centre) and MR. J. STEWART-WOOD, two past Chairmen of the MGA.

reasons, firstly because it is small in size and therefore a small-sized advertisement looks proportionately larger; and secondly and quite frankly because it was the cheapest national newspaper we could find. The main characteristic of this press campaign (which has been placed through our advertising agents G. Street & Co. Ltd.) is the consistency of the insertions. The retail trade now knows that we are advertising mushrooms very frequently and the response to this can be seen in two ways: in the greater number of greengrocers who now sell mushrooms and in the number of people who have taken the trouble to send us a 2½d. stamped envelope for a copy of our recipe leaflet. Our advertising in the *Daily Sketch* is doing a good job. The cost of this advertising works out at £1,000 per year.

Public Relations

Albion Publicity Ltd. was officially appointed last August to act as Public Relations Advisors to the MGA and to carry out the work involved in that connection. Guy Reed, who had hitherto dealt with our Public Relations work, became a director of Albion Publicity with responsibility for supervising, in their offices, the MGA interests. The following is a brief outline of their activities on our behalf:—

In conjunction with our Publicity Committee, a very successful Mushroom Exhibition was arranged at the Tea Centre which almost 20,000 members of the public attended in the five days. Huge quantities of recipe leaflets were distributed and the public was given practical demonstrations in mushroom dishes by the eight cook demonstrators present. From a Public Relations standpoint the most valuable feature was the Press Party held on the morning of the opening date, when the Exhibition Hall was packed out with invited guests consisting of the most influential cook-journalists and editors of women's publications as well as representatives of newspapers from all parts of the country.

Press Liaison

With the added facilities now available liaison with the press has been intensified. Apart from initiating ideas and suggestions for articles

in magazines and newspapers, a fruitful source of added publicity has been through following up certain types of items that appear among press clippings and either meeting or entering into correspondence with the authors of them.

Radio and Television

By means of contacts with Radio and Television personalities and programme arrangers a large number of mentions and even features of mushrooms have been obtained. Through one such contact a series of six I.T.V. Television programmes all include mushrooms. Another resulted in mentions on four days in one week in the popular B.B.C. "Housewives' Choice" Programme. These are only two of many examples.

Correction of Wrong or Misleading Statements

Attention is being given to the correction of wrong or misleading statements about mushrooms made in the press and by speakers and by writers of cookery books, etc. A large number of valuable corrections have been made as a result of such efforts, and it would be helpful if members will call to our attention any examples they see or hear which require attention.

Cookery Demonstrations

At present there are three major cookery demonstration tours visiting the larger centres in this country. (1) Bon Viseur, (2) Jean Conil, (3) The "Young Cooks" in a show called "Fare Play." Through close contact with all of these, mushrooms are prominently featured by each. Contact is also maintained with the Gas Council, the Electricity Authority, Women's Institutes, etc., with a view to increasing the use of mushrooms in their cooking demonstrations, lectures, etc.

Press Releases

A by-monthly press release is circulated to the Women's page editor of all worthwhile Daily and Weekly papers (both National and Provincial) providing them with material for articles on mushrooms and a selection of recipes. So far this has brought good results and it is anticipated that interest in it will increase with repetition.

Valentine Card

On 14th of February, a Valentine Card was sent to all the leading national and provincial press. The drawings for this were done by Ronald Searle and the poem inside by Eric Keown of *Punch*. (Both received mushrooms in exchange). This has caused much favourable comment in Fleet Street and has drawn letters, messages and even poems of appreciation. The idea originated with Raymond Thompson.

Exhibitions, etc.

Arrangements have been made with suitable exhibitors at various exhibitions and shows, to display or demonstrate with mushrooms. These include large exhibitions held at Olympia down to smaller exhibitions and shows elsewhere.

HEATHER FARM LTD.

'KING OF WORKING' - MUSHROOMS
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17th December 1957.

Messrs. W. Derlington & Sons Ltd.,
Southcourt Road,
Worthing.

Dear Sirs,

Dear Sirs,

With the year almost at an end and our production the highest in the history of the Company, we feel we cannot let the occasion pass without thanking you for the excellent services you have rendered.

Yours faithfully,
The British and Imported

Apart from trials of other British and imported strains, we have used your grain spawn exclusively and have yielded and quality to our absolute satisfaction. You may be interested to know that our average yield is still rising and last month was a record for production, when we marketed no less than 41,000 lbs. of mushrooms, excluding stalks.

Our salesmen assure us that during this period the quality of our mushrooms has been of a consistently high standard which has been confirmed by market returns.

Please consider yourself at liberty to use this letter in any way you may think fit.

Yours faithfully,

Director

DARLINGTON'S

100%

**PRODUCTIVE, PURE CULTURE
MUSHROOM SPAWN**

Co-operation with Other Advertisers

Special efforts are made in the utilizing of contacts among Advertisers and Advertising Agencies, etc., in influencing them to use mushroom rooms in connection with their own advertising and promotional literature. Efforts in this connection have brought extremely good results particularly in the case of booklets and advertising for other food products.

Trade Press

Contact with the Horticultural, the Hotel and Catering publications and retailers' journals have brought very satisfactory results. They have shown themselves particularly receptive to ideas and recipes provided and have been very generous with the space they have devoted to them.

Press Clippings

We have on display here some pages from the scrap book maintained by Albion Publicity, showing some of the publicity obtained since August. It is, of course, impossible to collect clippings of anything like all the items that appear. But even taking what we see here, you will agree it makes a very impressive showing. At commercial rates it would represent many tens of thousands of pounds worth of space and must have a profound effect in increasing the popularity and consumption of mushrooms. We pay a fee of £1,500 for the services of Albion Publicity Ltd., plus other charges incurred with our approval.

Mushroom Bags

Over 10,000,000 bags have been distributed so far, and although this is only half the number we hoped to distribute, I think you will agree that it is no small number. We have three active suppliers, Hobbs of Ashford; Crescens Robinson of South London, and T. W. Bridger of North London. Japa Paper Products of Leeds are also distributing bags but under slightly different arrangements. Steps are being taken to increase the number of retailers who use these bags and we anticipate that, by the end of the next twelve months, 20,000,000 bags at least per annum will be used. As you know, we subsidize the bag makers to the extent of 1/- per 1,000 bags. This type of publicity is extremely worthwhile. Here are two recent examples:—

Lewis's Stores. A week's display in each of the eight branches, consisting of mushrooms growing in trays, mushroom posters and mushroom bags, increased sales by 100%—in fact a weekly sale of 1,740 lb. increased to over 3,500 lb.

Alex. Campbell of Glasgow. Increased sales by 400%—without trays, just through mushroom bags and mushroom posters.

General

In addition to the foregoing, publicity funds have been used for the Royal Show at Norwich (at which Major Dredge was so successful), and in printing slimming recipes and other items of printed publicity. In all, we have done our very best to make do with what must really be regarded as one of the smallest publicity funds for an Association like ours. Now comes the question: *What results have we secured?*

I think they can be summed up as follows:—

Mushroom Price Levels have been maintained

Over the years I think it is generally accepted that there has been a gradual fall in price. Now prices seem to be steady.

More Greengrocers Selling Mushrooms

Because the trade knows that there is a continuous publicity campaign, greengrocers are more anxious to sell mushrooms than ever before. This is the result we want, for *our* customers are the greengrocers.

Salesman's Publicity Contributions

Of the firms who contribute to the publicity fund, there has been no lessening of contributions to date, and in many instances, increased contributions have been received. This seems to be a very good sign, for it shows that the salesmen have confidence in our publicity efforts.

We need more money for we must expand our publicity. I am convinced that there is a big market waiting. You saw some market research figures last summer in the *Bulletin*. These referred to the opinions of only 200 women, but they did indicate that more people could be induced to buy more mushrooms and more frequently, for only 24% of the women in London and 34% in Manchester were regular mushroom customers.

With increased income we could undertake the following:

Have a bigger press advertising campaign so as to influence another large section of the public. We have in mind the *Daily Mirror* and perhaps another big one, such as the *Daily Express*.

Bring more influence to bear upon the buying public by the use of small signs actually on the chips in the greengrocer's shop—small signs which will remind the housewife as her eyes can scan the rows of vegetables offered for her choice.

Develop public relations in the press, on the air, on television and through demonstrations and exhibitions.

Issue Tested Recipes. We have a recipe testing panel, consisting of members' wives, who are kindly testing out the various mushroom



Left to right: Mr. M. C. LUXMOORE (Snowcap Mushrooms Ltd., Yaxley), Mr. SNOWDON (Messrs. C. Snowdon & Co. Ltd., Salesmen, Sheffield), Dr. R. L. EDWARDS and Mr. C. G. STOCKING (South Luffenham, Rutland).

recipes and analyzing their qualities. We wish to distribute these tested recipes far and wide to the public; to such influential bodies as the Women's Institutes, Townswomen's Guild, the Mothers' Union, and to all the appropriate Local Authorities who are concerned in any way with diet, nutrition and school and institutional feeding.

All these items are very vital; our publicity must be designed to make an impact on the masses and to widen our markets.

There followed a full discussion on publicity.

Mr. Atkins stated that he was one of the pioneers some years ago in trying to get some sort of scheme launched. He said he thought the work of the Publicity Committee was magnificent but his average prices last year were between 3d. and 2d. a lb. less than the year before and for January and February of this year the average price had been 5d. net per lb. below the figure in January and February last year. He was not blaming publicity but "do not be blind to the fact that prices are not as good to-day as they were last year."

Mr. Baker said they should not compare one month with another month but one year with the next year. His prices in 1955/56 were 3s. 5d.; in 1956/57 3s. 4½d.; in 1957/58 3s. 4d.—a drop of 1d. over the last three years. He wondered what the drop would have been without publicity.

Mr. Middlebrook said that his own figures from his own markets proved that in 1950 the net price was 3s. 5d., so the price had not risen in seven years. The tendency was to go down slightly. Some costs had gone up as much as 50% in those seven years. There was no point in being complacent and as Mr. Atkins had already stated the 3s. 5d. of to-day was not the same value as 3s. 5d. in 1950. He suggested that they raise their spawn levy to 1s. per carton, and said he had suggested this some five or six years ago, and got shouted down. The time had now arrived when they should consider the possibility of 1s. per carton for a spawn levy.

The Chairman observed that they were inclined to laugh at Mr. Middlebrook, but he was firmly convinced that Mr. Middlebrook was on the right track, although perhaps stepping a bit high. Prices had dropped and expenses had gone up, together with the decrease in the value of money. The only way to overcome this gap was to sell more mushrooms.

Mr. Atkins urged everyone not to forget the possibility that if they increased the contribution six times they would not get six times as much money. He preferred to pay 2d. or 3d. or 6d., but when it came to 1s. he would hesitate.

The Chairman said that Linfields had contributed about half the total contributions of *growers* towards publicity. They did so because they used more spawn than most people in spawning so "their relative contribution is higher than ours." "You might say their farm is bigger than the rest of us and they can afford to pay more but they are canning and processing a large amount of their mushrooms and their business is running a personal advertising campaign to advertise their own processed mushrooms. Thus they also, indirectly, advertise ours."

The Chairman said all he was trying to say was that he did not think they should hesitate because one person might say they were not going to pay. Members should say "we want to do so and so and if anyone

wants to follow, they can." They had had this attitude before when the scheme first started.

Dr. Edwards said Mr. Middlebrook, in putting this idea forward, had pointed out that if they increased their spawn contribution from 2d. to 1s. they would have six times as much money to play with. If big growers were not going to play at that rate it knocked the stuffing out of the six times.

Mr. Clifford King stated he wished to endorse Mr. Middlebrook's views. He thought large growers would see their side of it.

Mr. Atkins proposed 6d. on a carton of spawn.

Mr. A. D. Jones seconded this.

Mr. Middlebrook then proposed 1s. per carton which was seconded by Mr. King.

Mr. Bleazard said he did not think this was a meeting at which they ought to issue a directive to the committee that the levy should be 6d. He felt it should be given a little more consideration and that the Committee be instructed to investigate the possibilities of increasing the levy to 6d.

Mr. Middlebrook said that if he had to come merely to tell the Committee to do something he might as well have stayed at home (laughter).

Mr. Stewart-Wood thought if one person was asked to pay 1s. all should be asked to do it. There should be no discrepancies on the size of farms. They would all enjoy the benefits of publicity.

The Chairman said they were not going to hold up the whole scheme because one or two people would not play. Once the scheme was put into operation everybody would play.

Mr. F. G. McLean did not think it mattered how much publicity was increased if shops pushed mushrooms into a corner—this did not do any good at all.

Mr. Guy Reed thought if the previous statement was true that would be a greater reason to increase publicity.

Mr. Stewart-Wood said they should sell more if they were pushed more.

Mr. Reed replied that they were doing certain things in that direction and should intensify them.

Mr. Longhill, "a grower in a very small way," said the question of publicity was of very great importance to the trade and his own company had increased its sales of mushrooms. He said he would like first of all to be rather humble. "Whilst we have paid our levy on spawn, my company (salesmen) has not paid anything else towards the publicity campaign." He would see that this was corrected right away. Their

sales of mushrooms had increased and he felt that the publicity done by the Committee had helped materially towards their sales. Regarding the £s.d. of the publicity campaign, over this period of years they had decided that an equitable method for growers was per carton.

Mr. P. B. Stanley-Evans felt that Mr. Bleazard had produced a common sense suggestion that a questionnaire might go out to growers asking what additional levy they were prepared to pay, so that the scheme might not go off at half cock.

Mr. Bleazard said they could see if a questionnaire would produce the money. He would like to adopt the 10% suggestion. He thought 10% was all right but 1s. would be a mistake.

Mr. Baker, in supporting Mr. Bleazard, asked for the questionnaire to be sent out with the blessing of the meeting. He would like to get the feeling of the meeting before it was sent out.

Mr. A. G. Pointing said he thought it was really a question of basic economics. Growers got considerably more by their own efforts. His firm had been associated with Lewis's in their recent efforts and Lewis's increased their sales too by 100%.

Mr. Baker thought publicity might well have prevented a large loss over the last year or two.

Mr. E. H. Palfrey maintained that 10% was a good idea because cost of spawn making would rise and it would prevent a constant readjustment over three or four years. The second thing was that the attitude seemed to be that "we must eke out a little more money for a doubtful scheme" when he thought the real attitude should be that this was definitely worthwhile.

Mr. Rudkin said they had missed one point of view. They had so far considered the levy or the contributions from the grower's point of view but it was equally important to consider what could be done with the money. They had between £4,000 and £5,000 on the present levy. If they were to make it 6d. it would be three times that. If we had six times it would be much more. He then read some of the T.V. expenses of the last six months that had been recorded. Bacon Information Council—£20,000; Egg Marketing Board—£17,000; Fish—£74,000; Butter—£22,000. If they raised their contribution from £4,000 to £12,000 they would even then not get much time on T.V. It was important to stress the fact that to be effective, they should be on T.V. fairly frequently. It was no good going on once and then waiting a long time. He thought they should bear in mind what they could do with the contribution if they got it because that was the major point.

The Chairman asked if anyone would put the 10% as a definite proposition to the meeting.

Mr. Atkins proposed that the levy should be raised to 10% and this was seconded in a number of places.

Mr. Middlebrook suggested 1s. per carton.

The Chairman said the scheme was voluntary and they had 94% who previously agreed voluntary contribution.

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Mr. Stanley-Evans felt they ought to find out the views of all members and **the Chairman** said they would send out a circular to all members.

Mr. Pointing thought that everyone was assuming that publicity was the answer to all the problems of the economics of their trade. More expenditure on publicity would make very little difference in the end. "Economics is not going to get the housewife to spend money she hasn't got on mushrooms," he said. "It is a matter of basic economics. We could spend £10,000 or £15,000 in no time at all." He was not saying anything against publicity, but if more mushrooms were sold and the price went up, large growers would double their output.

The Chairman "We are trying to stabilise prices."

Mr. Pointing: "We are being bulldozed into something and I think more ought to be done on the suggestion of the questionnaire and it should be discussed properly and calmly and give people a chance to express their feelings freely."

Mr. King: "Most of the progressive growers are present so now is the time to say it."

The Chairman: "This is your forum—the only time in the year when growers air their views. One of the weaknesses I see is that never once in the year does the Chairman of the MGA get a chance of talking with growers except on the day he is walking out. I propose the acceptance of this recommendation to send the circular out."

Mr. C. G. Stocking said that before they left the question of spawn publicity there was one point that had not been mentioned and that was the spawn manufacturers. Could he be told what percentage of publicity money they contributed?

Mr. Baker: "The spawn manufacturers voluntarily undertook to collect the levy and that entailed them in considerable work. One of our good friends, Messrs. Mounts, add 50% to the contribution received from growers. Mounts are not growers, they are spawn manufacturers, but the other spawn makers are growers and pay their proportion of the levy."

Mr. Stocking: "If the mushroom industry is to progress then the spawn industry is also to benefit. If the grower is to have his contribution increased is it not right that the spawn manufacturers should also be asked to make the same contribution?"

The Chairman said this was a good point but it had taken many months to get this scheme working and the fact that the spawn merchants operated it was a contribution from them. The majority did grow mushrooms and so contributed towards the funds. He did not think he would like to ask any more of them.

When the motion to raise the levy to 10% was put to the meeting only one hand was raised against.

The Honorary Treasurer (Mr. Filmer) read his report and the Accounts were adopted. **The A/c's will be fully reproduced in next month's issue of *The Bulletin*.**

The result of the election for the two vacant general seats on the Executive Committee was then announced. Mr. Raymond Thompson and Mr. E. A. Gook were elected. Elected unopposed for the three area seats were Messrs. F. C. Atkins, R. Pinkerton and G. Griffiths.

The Chairman thanked Mr. G. W. Baker and Captain Lawrence (both past Chairmen) for their work on behalf of the Association.

Mrs. Allen, on behalf of the MGA Ladies' Recipe Panel, thanked the Executive Committee for giving the Panel the opportunity of meeting and thanked Mr. Rudkin for the kind advice he had given them. She stated that at a discussion on publicity that morning, it had been felt by the Panel that an approach should be made to County Education Authorities and so to their cookery demonstrators, to supply them with recipes and suitable literature. Mrs. Allen went on to say that in this, members' wives could be really helpful and asked that official backing be given.

The Chairman stated that the meeting would have to end as it was nearing 5 o'clock and the room had to be vacated.

Mr. Atkins protested that there should be more time to discuss other important matters such as a mushroom co-operative organisation.

Mr. W. A. B. Harding supported Mr. Atkins.

The Chairman replied that it was not possible to do so now but in order to satisfy everyone there should be another meeting at Agriculture House. He suggested that Mr. Atkins gave a short résumé of the ideas of the Committee and a vote be taken.

Mr. Atkins stated that the MGA was greatly restricted in that it was non-trading and that a Mushroom Co-operative, if formed, could remove rubbish from the market. The removal of 10% from the market at a nominal sum would do as much as publicity for the industry as a whole. Mr. Atkins went on to suggest a general vote and asked members if they would be prepared to give £1 each to set up an organisation which would enable the Association to trade.

This was carried unanimously.

Dr. Edwards expressed regret that the Annual Luncheon had not started punctually and suggested that, another year, luncheon be finished promptly and the room booked for a longer space of time so that there could be full discussion on all matters.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

In his Report the Secretary said:—

“ For the first time since I have been Secretary of your Association I have to record a slight drop in total membership, 639 this year against the record figure of 658 announced at the 1957 annual meeting. This year's figure of 639 is made up of 399 Grower Members (seven less than last year) and 240 Associate Members (a drop of 12). In view of the increase in subscriptions which came into force on 1st January,

1957, this slight membership drop is perhaps understandable and it certainly isn't serious as it stands. Of those Grower Members who have dropped out all of those whom I contacted stated that they were no longer growing mushrooms. The membership picture which I have given is not quite complete for the figures refer only to paid up members. In point of fact your membership, at any given time, is about 700 plus some 45 Honorary Members.

The Bulletin continues to play its important part in the work and well-being of the Association and I am happy to again pay tribute to the work of your small but efficient Editorial Board, Mr. F. C. Atkins and Dr. R. L. Edwards, both of whom are most industrious and quite uncomplaining. There was an increase in advertising revenue of £88 on the year but costs, especially postage, continued to rise. In connection with the Bulletin I again appeal to all members to support those who take advertising space—and an exceedingly loyal band of advertisers they are too. I get a great deal of ready co-operation too from Messrs. W. S. Maney & Son Ltd., the Bulletin printers.

I would like to add a special word of thanks to Dr. Edwards for his unflinching work in the matter of providing the answers to a great many tricky technical questions which I am asked from time to time and which leave me floundering in the wilderness of mushroom cultivation.

Executive Committee

Your Executive Committee met six times and the attendances were: Mr. G. V. Allen, Mr. F. Bleazard, Capt. G. P. Lawrence, Messrs. G. W. Baker, E. A. Gook, J. A. Linfield, G. V. Reed and P. B. Stanley-Evans (all 6), Messrs. F. C. Atkins, N. R. Cooper, F. L. Filmer, J. Stewart-Wood and A. J. Berry (5), Mr. A. A. Spencer (2), Mr. Middlebrook and Mr. Campbell Melville from Scotland (1)."

ADJOURNED ANNUAL MEETING

After a long discussion at the adjourned Annual General Meeting at Agriculture House, Knightsbridge, on Thursday, 17th April, it was agreed, by an overwhelming majority, that the Executive Committee should thoroughly investigate the suggestion of a co-operative processing plant and, as soon as possible, should present a report to all members before taking further action.

The meeting, attended by between 60 and 70 growers also gave full support to the forming of a Mushroom Co-operative, which had been agreed at the Annual Meeting but about which, owing to time, there had been little discussion.

A vote on the processing plant project and the Co-operative showed 58 growers in favour and only two against.

Mr. F. Bleazard, Chairman of the MGA Executive, presided over the adjourned meeting and, at his invitation, **Mr. Fred. C. Atkins** outlined the processing proposal. He said the Executive wanted to see second grade mushrooms, stalks and such "rubbish" removed from the market altogether. The Committee sought approval of the scheme

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in principle so the Committee could go ahead and look more closely into the many problems involved. There were questions of actual processing, of research into processing and of marketing, to name one or two. "Your presence at this meeting is not so that you can be informed that a Committee can and will be set up to investigate these matters but to try and get you to agree and to give your backing so that the proposals can be investigated" he said. Later, in reply to **Mr. Stanley Middlebrook**, he said the object of setting up a Mushroom Co-operative Association was to have such an Association in being so that it could be made immediate use of if and when required, without the delay of holding another general meeting of growers. "Our weakness as an Association is that we cannot trade and this Co-operative takes care of that" he said. **Mr. H. L. Coulson** (Worthing) said second or third rate mushrooms came from certain regular sources and such growers tended to produce sub-standard mushrooms rather more than anything else. These growers might well find themselves subsidised by a Co-operative. He felt the Association could be wrong in encouraging more people into the industry although he himself had been happy enough to become a member. The idea of voluntary co-operation was good but "it may encourage greater production of mushrooms." Earlier Mr. Coulson had congratulated the MGA on its work, its journal and its fine example of voluntary co-operation.

Dr. R. L. Edwards made the point that it was only true to a limited extent that it would not be necessary for a Co-operative to make a profit. The report of **Mr. Reed** and **Mr. Stanley-Evans** had envisaged 50,000 lb. of mushrooms to be processed each day and "that will mean that we shall have a lot of cans of mushrooms to sell." **Dr. Edwards** went on "We are in the happy position at the moment, of being able to sell all our fresh mushrooms but that does not happen with processed foods because of strong sales competition." Big commercial canners bought on a fixed contract price usually. Prices at which the Co-operative processing plant would buy were of direct concern to growers." **Dr. Edwards** later asked **Mr. Reed** if he had any idea of what the fixed Co-operative price might be and **Mr. Reed** replied that to give such a figure was not possible at the moment. "This is not a set up designed to take second grade mushrooms and stalks off the market but the removal of mushrooms which do not sell at a minimum price which we decide. That price would vary with the time of the year. Mushrooms would, of course, go direct to the processing plant."

Dr. Edwards, remarking on the suggestion that new processes would have to be devised and new products put on the market, said the report by **Mr. Reed** and **Mr. Stanley-Evans** envisaged the setting up of a research unit for this purpose. Such a unit would cost a great deal of money and much time would elapse before anything useful came about. He thought it would be better to consult experienced food consultants and pay them a fee and royalties on any recipe used.

Mr. Eric White (Northern Ireland) said he was associated with a firm of canners and was aware of the many difficulties involved. He

enumerated some of these difficulties and expressed the hope that the investigation into the problem would be most thorough. He did not think it would work.

Mr. Coulson pointed to the difficulty of regular supplies to a cannery and of the sales problems involved. "Where", he asked "are the markets to be found?"

Mr. Atkins said there was a vast untapped market in various parts of the world. He added "The object of this venture is price stabilisation and not necessarily a rise in price."

Mr. R. Thompson commented that one firm appeared to have solved all these problems successfully and **Mr. G. V. Allen** advocated the setting up of a small and inexpensive pilot cannery for the canning of all grades of mushrooms. **Mr. Baker** interjected to say that a small cannery might cost £20,000 but **Mr. Graham Griffiths** (Somerset) said he had operated a small canning unit the cost of which had been only a very few pounds. He wondered if small units could be sited on the larger farms and the canned products sent to a central co-operative for selling.

Mr. Clifford King (Surrey) referring to a suggestion that the MGA should be less easy to join said the idea was a good one for existing growers but was morally wrong.

In the subsequent discussion, which ranged over a wide field, **Mr. R. Duthy** (Colchester), **Mr. Peter Dredge** (Kent), **Mr. G. D. Griffin** (Surrey), **Mr. H. Stead** (Yorks.) and **Mr. J. Ady** (Surrey) were among the speakers. The latter asked if it was possible that any majority decision could be forced on the minority but the dangers of this were expressed by several speakers. **Mr. Ady** also said he had gone into the matter of canning and would be pleased to place his knowledge at the disposal of any investigating committee.

In summing up the Chairman said the Committee was concerned with measures for price stabilisation and the Executive should lead the industry in this matter. He said he would like to see **Dr. Edwards**, who had experience in this field, accept the job of looking into the actual processing side of the project and the Chairman said he felt any such investigation should be financed by the MGA.

As already stated it was agreed by an overwhelming majority that the investigation should take place and, in due course, the findings should be placed before members.

OPEN DAY

Mr. F. W. Toovey, Director, Glasshouse Crops Research Institute, Rustington, Littlehampton, has kindly consented to hold an "Open Day", specially for MGA members, at the Institute on Thursday, 12th June, when the new mushroom research unit will be in operation. The MGA Executive Committee hope that as many members as possible will take advantage of this opportunity of visiting the Institute and discussing mushroom problems with members of the staff who are engaged on mushroom research.

WORLD'S PRESS DIGEST

February has always been a month for the most attractive **prices** for mushrooms, but this year we seem to have fallen down; there is a glut which may be due to the very quick recent variations in temperatures. (Cheshire correspondent in *The Grower*, March 8/58). Mushrooms were hard to move at the beginning of the week when most housewives were confining their purchases to necessities. (*The Grower*, March 1/58.) The mushroom trade has fallen away, and heavy consignments remained with the wholesalers. (*Nurseryman Seedsman*, March 6/58.) Mushrooms were being asked for, and heavy supplies moved freely. (*Nurseryman Seedsman*, March 13/58). Consignments of mushrooms were lighter, but they were in fair demand and moving steadily (*Nurseryman Seedsman*, March 20/58).

An electronic **water meter** is one of the latest sundries to be marketed in America. Known as the M-Scope, it is being sold by Fisher Research Laboratories, Palo Alto, California. *Grower*, February 8/58.

Experimental tests have shown that the use of a 4 per cent. **malathion** dust, at the rate of 1½ to 2 pounds per 60 foot single house, about twice a week, should be safe to use in the air of mushroomhouses. Pick the marketable mushrooms first, dust at once, then don't dust again before the next mushrooms are picked the next day, 24 hours after dusting. (The U.S. Food and Drug Administration have announced a tolerance of 8 parts per million of malathion on cultivated mushrooms; this means that 8 parts, or less, of malathion is permitted per one million parts of mushroom tissue).

AMI's *Mushroom News*, February /58.

Loaded pallets with a total weight of up to 4,500 lb. can be pulled or pushed in any direction, or turned through a full circle, on a low-loading **bogie truck** introduced by Powell & Co., Bury Port, Carmathen. The bogie is intended for use in confined spaces where fork trucks cannot operate satisfactorily. *Packaging News*, February/58.

An apparatus which enables **samples of gases** and vapours, particularly halogenated hydrocarbons, to be withdrawn from the air spaces of soil without disturbing the structure is described in the *Journal of Applied Chemistry*, 7, 1957. A single determination can be carried out in two minutes.

Agricultural & Horticultural Engineering Abstracts, No. 1/58.

Mushroom crops are finishing in glasshouses in the Lea Valley and are being cleared for tomatoes. Some growers have found that certain **strains of spawn** do better under their own particular conditions than others. *Grower*, February 15/58.

Plant breeders are continually searching for resistant and tolerant varieties but, thought Dr. I. W. Selman, Reader of Agricultural Botany at Wye College, the greatest hope lay in the study of nutritional and environmental conditions that lead to **resistance**.

Nurseryman Seedsman, February 13/58.

Who is **pre-packing**? The trend is towards the development of larger packing stations, handling quantities of produce and guaranteeing a continuity of supply to retail outlets.

Packaged Food Selling, February/58.

In 1955 **pre-packing** in the United States had dropped from 40 per cent. to 20 per cent., and eventually there would be a similar drop here, in the opinion of Mr. C. Hawkins, Crowhurst Farms, Kent, Ltd.

Fruit Trades' Journal, March 1/58.

A. G. Linfield Ltd. are planning an eventual output of **nine million pounds** of mushrooms a year. First step—to increase products from five to seven millions—has just been completed.

Grower, April 12/58.

The highly publicized **sawdust-oatmeal process** of growing mushrooms, said to be extremely cheap, has too many practical limitations to be of any threat to the present industry, the Associated Mushroom Industries of Berks. County, Pa., was told. Dr. Leon R. Kneebone said that one of the key factors overlooked is the need for sterilization of the sawdust-oatmeal compost, which was very costly and an absolute necessity ; and he asked: Why try to grow another type of mushroom unless it will result in increased sales?

AMI's Mushroom News, March/58.

The Research and Development Committee of the Timber Development Association has taken over the **timber research** and technological development advisory services of the Forest Products Research Laboratory.

Scope, March/58.

Moderate flushes were being thrown up in one orchard more than a year after the initial use of "spent" compost as a manure. During that period of time, sporulation of the introduced species of mushroom was, of course, occurring. In such a set-up the possibilities of some specific disease resistance arising might well be increased. An **invigoration** of cultivated mushroom "stock" might then be possible.

Martin D. Austin in *Commercial Grower*, February 21/58.

A company was found guilty by a Federal Court jury of shipping **mushroom salt** containing insect filth. The defendant was sentenced to 18 months in prison and a fine of 1,000 dollars on each of two counts.

AMI's Mushroom News, March/58.

Development of a **mushroom chip** will be undertaken by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service laboratories in Philadelphia. At least one firm has shown an interest in this product; the Pop Corn Company of Philadelphia recently inquired about a source of dried mushrooms for experimental purposes.

AMI's Mushroom News, March/58.

Ireland is already operating a power station using milled peat as fuel and Scotland is following closely behind. Germany is also developing industrial uses of the Friesland peat resources and other countries are watching closely. **Peat bogs** will soon be worked out if they are expected to stand the onslaught of industrial demands.

Commercial Grower, February 28/58.

One outstanding problem awaiting the attention of the Mushroom Growers' Association is the vexed one of **home production**. Personal

disappointment, through failure to produce mushrooms under impossible conditions, must have created quite a considerable aggregate antipathy towards the crop. It is bad publicity (and) the industry has no control over its instigators. *Commercial Grower*, February 21/58.

Zineb has been found to control the citrus rust mite, in tests made in Florida. *Grower*, February 8/58.

Mushrooms are good in the **East Riding of Yorkshire**, with some of the best quality and weight per square foot for years. Over 3 lb. per sq. ft. is reported from one house, and other houses are showing the possibility of a slightly higher margin.

Commercial Grower, February 28/58.

A new, self-contained, pocket-sized **pH meter** will be shown at the Physical Society Exhibition on 24th March, by Cambridge Instrument Co. Ltd., of 13 Grosvenor Place, London, S.W.1.

Nurseryman Seedsman, February 20/58.

One of the largest and most unusual mushroom growing operations in the United States is the **Butler County Mushroom Farm, Inc.**, in West Winfield, Pa. Located in, above and around an old abandoned limestone mine, the year-round operation produces from 20,000 to 25,000 pounds of mushrooms a day. It covers 506 acres above ground and has approximately 15 miles of growing-room underground. The enterprise was started in 1937 by two large Ohio greenhouse operators, M. S. and Ira D. Yoder. The firm to-day employs about 225 persons.

AMI's Mushroom News, March/58.

F.C.A. TO SPEAK AT AMERICAN SHORT COURSE

Mr. Fred. C. Atkins of Noble Mushrooms Ltd., Yaxley, has accepted an invitation to speak at the American Short Course at Pennsylvania State College. The course is from 23rd to 26th June. The provisional titles of two papers to be given by Mr. Atkins are "The Mushroom Industry in Great Britain" and "Mushroom Problems in Britain To-day."

Also attending this course will be Mr. F. Bleazard of Blackpool, Chairman of the MGA, who will be accompanied by Mrs. Bleazard. Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Dumbreck of Mossiel, Dysart, Fife, will also be there, combining business with a holiday stay in Canada.

Continued from page 225

The MGA Publicity Committee is particularly grateful to those members who, most readily and at considerable trouble and expense, assisted with this effort. These members saw that each store was serviced with at least three trays of growing mushrooms and, in many cases, also arranged for a change of trays in mid-week. Those who helped in this way included:—Pinkerton's Scottish Mushroom Laboratories, Millerston, Glasgow; Marigold Nurseries Ltd., Leicester; S. A. F. Sampson Ltd., Oving, Chichester; Agaric Ltd., Bradford-on-Avon; Mr. A. J. Berry, Ruislip Common, Middx.; Mr. F. Bleazard, Blackpool; D. T. R. Beardsell Ltd., Formby, Lancs.; Mr. A. A. Spencer, Greenhill Nurseries Ltd., Leeds, and Mr. J. D. Brammer, Bagnall, Stoke-on-Trent.

PUBLICITY AT LEWIS'S STORES

AT LIVERPOOL . . .



Lewis's Ltd., the well-known store people with centres at Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester, Hanley (Stoke-on-Trent), Leicester, Birmingham, Leeds and Bristol, recently, in co-operation with the MGA Publicity Committee, held a "Mushroom Week" at all the centres named.

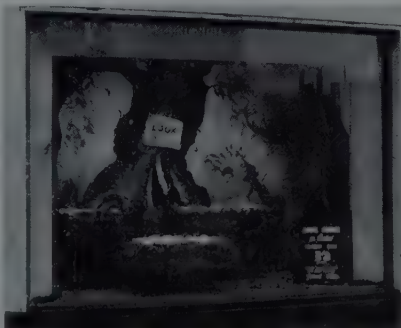
In spite of the exceptionally bad weather at the time the total sales in all stores rose from 1,700 lb. per week to a total of over 3,500 lb.

. . . AND AT BRISTOL

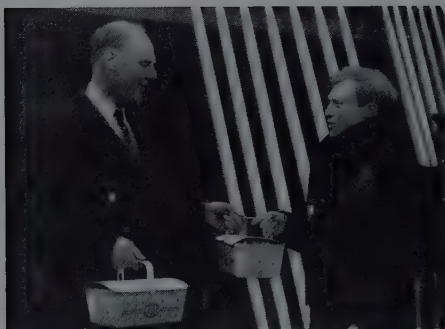
At each store a special window display, including mushrooms actually growing, proved the focal point for the general public and Lewis's report that rarely if ever before has a window display attracted so much attention.

Already the Publicity Committee has agreed to a suggestion by Lewis's that the effort shall be repeated at an early date. "We believe we can double the sales again" said an Executive of the store.

Continued on page 224



NOTED OARSMAN AND JOURNALIST GROWS MUSHROOMS



Although Oxford did not win this year's boat race most people are agreed that they put up a great fight and were in fine physical condition.

A regular item on their training diet was mushrooms, supplied by Mr. R. D. Burnell of Crooked Mats Nursery and Mushroom Farm, Woodley,

Berks., who is seen in the accompanying picture presenting a chip of mushrooms to Mr. Gavin Sorrell, President of the Oxford University Boat Club.

MGA member, Mr. Burnell, has a special interest in rowing and in Oxford, as he rowed in the Oxford boat in the 1939 race. Nowadays he confines his main activities to mushroom growing and journalism but behind him he has a magnificent record. Apart from being Captain of the England Rowing Team at the Empire Games in 1950 he was Amateur Sculling Champion of Great Britain in 1946 and winner of the Olympic Double Sculls in 1948.

Actual rowing apart, Mr. Burnell is widely known as a journalist and author. He is rowing correspondent to *The Times* and *World Sports*, was formerly Editor of *British Rowing Almanack* and he has occasionally broadcast on rowing matters for the B.B.C. He is the author of various books on rowing including *The Oxford & Cambridge Boat Race* and *Henley Regatta*.

Three or four years ago, Mr. Burnell became interested in mushroom cultivation, started growing mushrooms in a small garden shed and, deciding to go into full commercial production, took over a smallholding and nursery at Woodley, near Sonning where he now has some 10,000 sq. ft. in tray production. Says Mr. Burnell:—"I certainly would not regard myself yet as an established grower but most of the preparatory work is now behind myself and staff and we are now gradually working up production. I would like to add that I have been much encouraged by the helpfulness of other growers and of the MGA in my venture."

FARM WALKS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE SAYS—SUSPEND THEM

At the meeting of the MGA Executive Committee in London on 17th April, the question of farm walks, in the light of the continuance of the extremely troublesome "Watery Stipe" disorder, was under discussion for some time and it was eventually agreed to recommend that, for the time being and until more was known about "Watery Stipe", farm walks should be discontinued. It was made plain however that, as soon as the situation cleared, this valuable activity of the Association should be re-commenced.

Every encouragement is to be given to the holding of area meetings and the Executive Committee will endeavour to see that at least one prominent figure in the mushroom industry will be present at each meeting.

ARE YOU INSURED AGAINST FIRE AND CROP LOSS?

A report in Barrow's Worcester Journal states that 1,000 lb. of mushrooms were destroyed by fire on a farm at Leigh Sinton owned by Messrs. W. K. & M. M. Beard. In addition the entire building of timber and asbestos was also destroyed. The building measured about 80 ft. by 80 ft. Only part of it was used for mushroom growing. Mr. W. K. Beard estimated that it would take about six months to replace.

On 9th April, MGA member, Mr. E. G. Millais of Crosswater Farm, Churt, Surrey, lost a number of mushroom trays when fire broke out in a concrete and asbestos shed. The growing shed was being "heated out" following a crop.

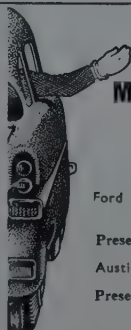
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*Spawn Merchants:—

Monlough Food Production Co. Ltd., Ballygowan, Belfast.			
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*Amounts collected by spawn merchants are not for publication.



MARCH AND (some) APRIL PUBLICITY CONTRIBUTIONS

Contributions continue to be received for the MGA Publicity Fund and the latest list of contributors appears herewith. To them and to all the others who assist, the MGA Publicity Committee is most grateful.

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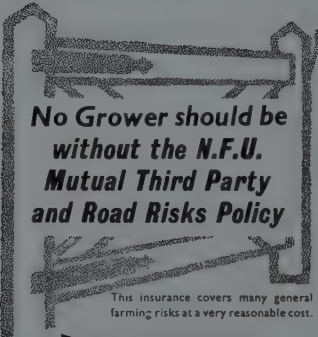
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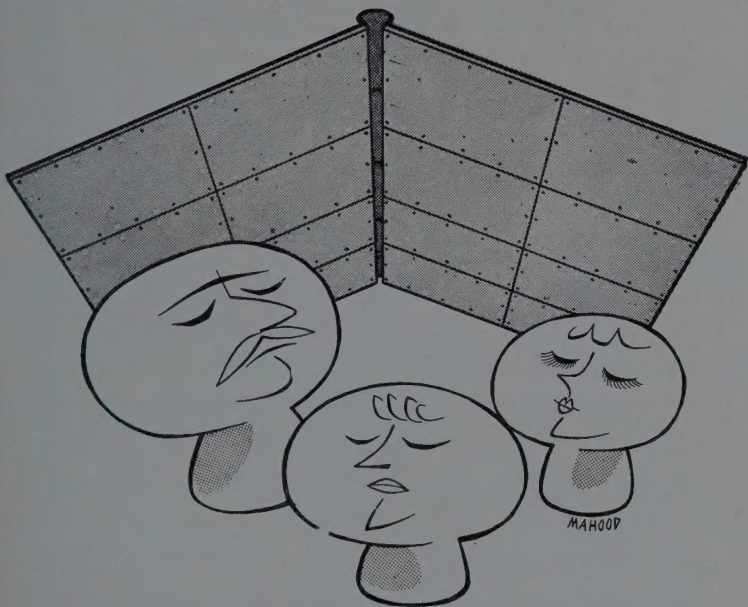
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